



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



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Charivaria

"GERMANY is now left without a friend in the world," says a writer. The FUEHRER still has a stack of pacts left for anyone interested, of course.

British cinemas are visited by something like 30,000,000 people every week. To see films something like the ones shown on the previous week.

Germany now has so much *lebensraum* that it may soon be possible to walk fifty kilometres for the daily paper.

It is announced that a girl working in a munitions factory has become engaged to the foreman. Who said Mr. BEVIN's recruiting methods lacked subtlety?



To save himself the trouble of reading them, we hear that the FUEHRER will in future dictate all the DUCE's speeches for him.

British airmen in the Middle East are being supplied with special flips to deal with the mosquito nuisance. They are, however, credited only with those insects that are actually seen to crash.



A well-known music-hall in Rome is closing down. And it is regarded as highly improbable that the Empire will ever re-open.

In a Yorkshire town an unattended car ran downhill, mounted the pavement and came to a stop over an open man-hole. The pedestrian, however, had seen the aperture in time.

It is proposed that a dance band formed by members of a Wardens' Post should continue in existence after the war. The signature tune would be, of course, "The A.R.P. that Once."

The loser in a tennis-tournament final stood only four-foot-six in his socks. It must have been thrilling to see him crawl under the net to congratulate the winner.

"Accompanied by several of his Ministers, he sat unrecognised by more than 500 worshippers in a seat at the back."—*Daily Paper*.

Ah well—they were probably pre-occupied.

All members of the building trade must register. What do cuckoos care?



"Given away by her father, the bride's dress was of white and gold brocade with family veil of old Limerick lace . . ."—*Devon Paper*.

Surely worth keeping?

There is some talk in France of appointing a deaf and dumb man to act as Official Spokesman for the Vichy Government.

I Have Surrounded You.

I HAVE surrounded you with thoughts as bright
As the Spring sunlight piercing through a cloud,
I have spoken your name in a voice sure and proud,
Have put my cowardly fears for you to flight;
I have kept your eager ardent face in sight
Nor ever voiced my loss of it aloud;
I have given you victory and not a shroud;
Nor ever asked of you, as once I might.

And when you make your journeys to and fro,
Through murky cloud and darkness and the blast
And other far more dangerous winds that blow,
No fear of mine shall deeper shadow cast:
My thoughts shall hold your knighthood close and fast,
They shall go with you wheresoever you go.

o o

Affairs, Current

THE Army Council, that restless and volatile body which, as everyone knows, cares as deeply for the soldier's boots as for his Bren gun and issues instructions with equal facility about either, has lately bent its communal mind upon the problem of current affairs (C.A.). It is the desire of the Army Council that the troops should be well-informed about C.A. The A.C. (Army Council) has therefore decreed that an Army Bureau (A.B.) should be set up to handle this problem of C.A. (Current Affairs), and the result has been the aptly-named A.B.C.A. I don't think this is secret. There have been paragraphs about it in the papers, so it is probably not.

Now whatever the Army Council says is law, but it doesn't necessarily worry the Army on that account, any more than the vast bulk of civil law worries us in peacetime. A man may not (if I remember rightly) marry his deceased aunt, but few men sleep uneasily of nights because of it. And similarly, when on August 31st, 1940, the word "chiropodist" was deleted, by command of the Army Council, from the Pay Warrant, 1940, and the words "Chiropody Orderly" substituted, there was very little grouching or despondency even in the commissioned ranks.

The A.B.C.A., however, is not in this class. One has hardly opened the pamphlet outlining its future activities before those fatal words "The Responsibility of the Regimental Officer" catch the eye.

"They're at us again," said Second-Lieutenant Straw, passing the pamphlet on. "Somebody's thought up another Responsibility."

"What is it?" asked Hopwood. "Keeping Your Spirits Up in a Fog, or have we all got to get Glider-Conscious?"

Hopwood was a Fifth Columnist on our manœuvres and he can't get it out of his blood.

"When I was at my private school during the last war," said the Orderly Officer, "the headmaster used to read us bits out of the paper in Break. Is that the sort of thing they've got in mind?"

"Probably," said Hopwood. "And when you've finished reading to them, the troops will be able to tell you the Stop Press from the wireless news at 0700 hours. So everyone will be better informed."

"Is Russia a Current Affair?" asked Straw. "It doesn't seem right to talk about 'the Current Affair in Russia.' Sounds rather too like the 'China Incident.'"

"Breakages?" said the Quartermaster suddenly. "You'll have to pay two-thirds of the value, you know."

"Oh, go to sleep again," said everyone.

However, Straw and I, in private conversation afterwards, agreed that the A.B.C.A. looked like being rather a good thing, and we decided to get up a few facts about Russia as a start.

"The great thing to impress on them about Russia is its size," I said, looking at War Map No. 6 and sticking a Union Jack in at Bandar-i-Shahpur.

"I know the sort of thing you mean," said Straw. "It does not seem to be generally realized that a man travelling from Chelyabinsk to Zima by train occupies more time over the journey than he would in riding three times round England and Wales on a tricycle."

"I thought there had been some improvement in Russian train-services," I said.

"You miss the point," said Straw. "From Chelyabinsk to Zima—"

"Where is Zima?"

"It's not on your map. It's round the corner between Tulum and Cheremkhovo—next stop Irkutsk. You've only got about a quarter of the U.S.S.R. there."

"Golly!" I said, and joined Straw at the World Map. "Let's do some measuring."

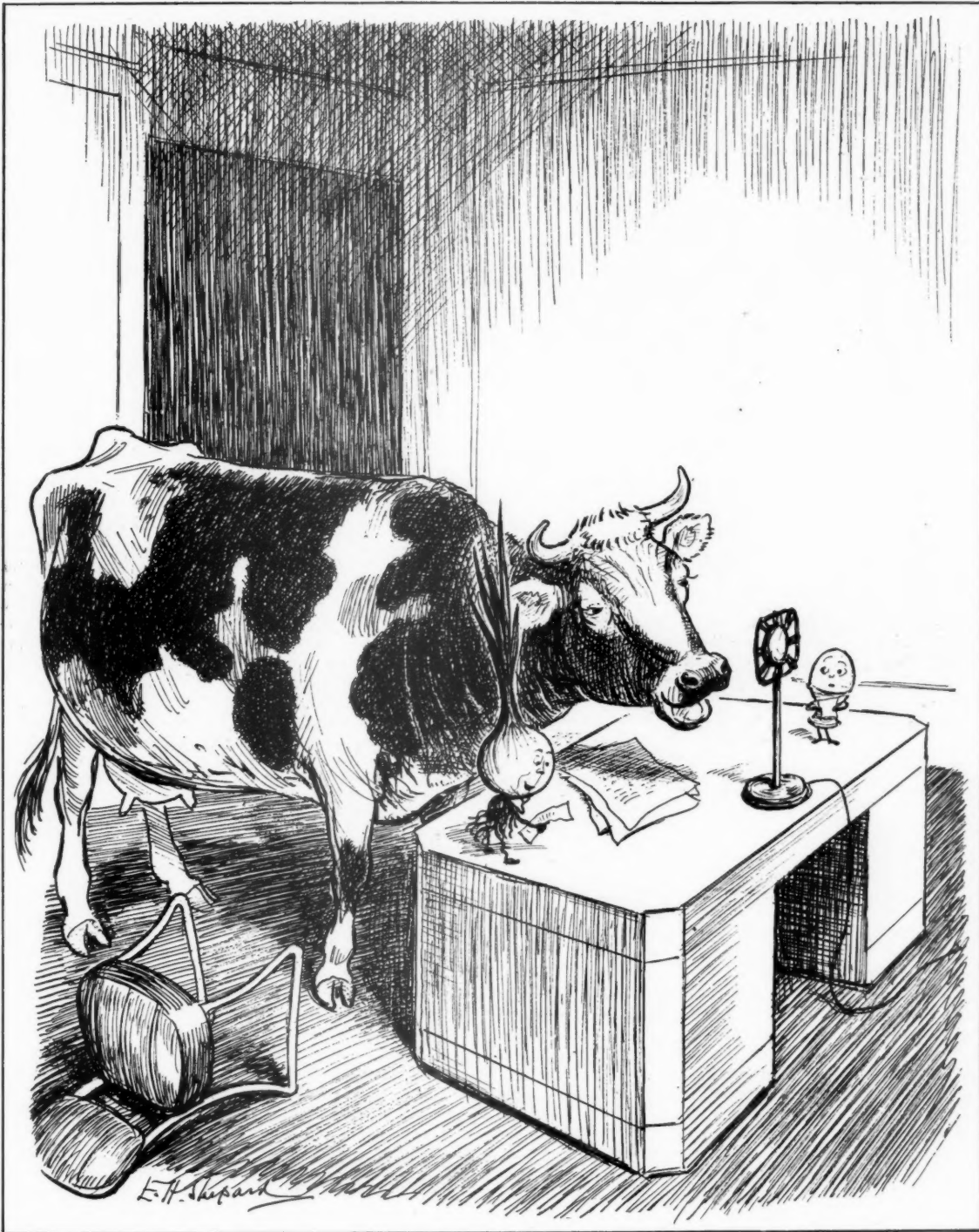
We measured Russia pretty thoroughly and elicited some interesting facts which I present in tabloid form for the use of R.C.A.O. (Regimental Current Affairs Officers).

1. It is about 1,200 miles from Smolensk to Magnitogorsk. This is only approximate, because sometimes one stretches the handkerchief more when applying it to the map than when measuring off against the scale, but the figure will serve. The Germans have not yet claimed the encirclement of Magnitogorsk, but when they do they are at liberty to reflect that there are another 4,000 miles to go before they start pushing the Russians into the Bering Sea. Straw says 4,200, but I am always having to warn him against wishful thinking. The difficulty is that one has to use the World Map for this measurement, and there is no intelligible scale on it. We tried counting the numbers of lines of longitude and multiplying by the distance between them (which we got from the other map), but you can't do that because they are parallel on the World Map and anything but on Map No. 6. Straw says it is something to do with the curvature of the earth, and we made a note to have a talk to the troops about Mercator's Projection—Is It Worth While?—later on.

2. The people in Magnitogorsk, or Nijni Talinsk for that matter, are as far from the Russo-German Front as we were when Baranowicz was in the news. Probably they don't even have a black-out.

3. There is a river in Siberia of which I had not previously heard, long enough to go right round Germany. I don't know how long it would take, but you could probably motor from Novosibirsk to the oddly-named Obluchye in the same time. If there is a road, that is. I have no touring map of the Soviet Union by me, and if I had I doubt if I should have the temerity to unfold it. Straw says there is probably some collective system for reading road-maps in Russia—three or four men to hold the corners while the navigator sticks his head through a hole in the middle and warns the driver to look out for a sharp turn to the north-east in another seven hundred miles. But he may be trying to pull my leg. We are going to ask the A.B.C.A. to give us a ruling on this point.

4. The Arctic Circle (A.C.) is just two handkerchief-lengths and a hem, and of this, one handkerchief-length less a hem is in the U.S.S.R. (on Mercator's Projection, that is; on the globe, I suppose one handkerchief would



COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PRODUCTION

"And first of all I want to say that we shall do our best to decrease absenteeism during the coming winter."



"I'd like just enough D.F.C. ribbon to go round my hat."

just about do the whole job). This means that all but one handkerchief-length and two hems of the Arctic Circle are in Russian territory. A good way of bringing this home to the troops is to tell them that only four hems-lengths of the Equator are in Africa. Straw says that this is the most shocking bilge, arguing that world maps are not all the same size. He doesn't seem to realize that handkerchiefs are not all the same size either—which disposes of that objection, I think.

5. The only other point worth making about the size of Russia is that the "S" of "Soviet" is equal to the distance from London to Southampton—I mean the length of the "S" from top to bottom as the crow flies. If you rode round the bends on a horse you would take longer than a man going from the Orkneys to London on a leave train.

Affairs, Current—Amendment No. 1.
For "longitude" in para. 1 above read "latitude."
H. F. E.

Switch it Off!

ANY news on the wireless to-day? . . .

Nothing to speak of Madam. Only a few bombs here and there (they didn't, of course, say exactly where)—Oh, we've lost some planes in a raid off Crete, and ten small ships of the Merchant Fleet. They say there's a billion men in Russia fighting a billion men from Prussia, and hundreds are dying like flies in the sand in Libya and the Holy Land. . . .

Thank you, May, so there isn't much news?

Nothing to speak of, Madam.

V. G.

Mathematics

YOU know those people who count on their fingers? Well, that's all I want to say about them; I only wanted to know if you knew any, because they are almost as comforting to watch as people who think the Macs are right at the end of the Ms in a telephone directory; they give you the same sudden sense of education. Next, I suppose, come the people in railway carriages who ask each other what nine sevens are; next, the people who read out a newspaper problem and then start looking for the back of an envelope and a pencil; and after that the people who say they are good at mathematics. There are, you see, all sorts of attitudes of mind to mathematics; indeed, it is safe to say that never before have there been so many, because all those people in the mathematical bits of the Navy and the Army and the Air Force must have thought themselves into attitudes of mind which ordinary people can only guess at. But I think that the attitude of ordinary people—the people I want to tell you about now—towards mathematics as a whole may be summed up as the same as their attitude to the police force; that is, knowing that it was invented to make life even more difficult, but unexpectedly glad of it every now and then.

I think that perhaps the most notable feature of mathematics is that people are always very anxious to teach it to other people at as early an age as possible, which (psychologists tell us) can probably be traced back to the fact that when *they* themselves were at as early an age as possible, *other* people were being very anxious to teach it to *them*. I mean, you have only to see one of those wooden enclosures you get round very small children, with a row of painted beads strung along one side, to realize that somewhere outside the enclosure a grown-up is waiting to explain that if you push thirteen beads along one way and fourteen the other you have the same twenty-seven beads you had before. It is another notable feature of mathematics that no one has ever seen a child pushing such beads about, but plenty of people have seen grown-ups doing it—rather wistfully, and without much hope of being taken notice of. You see, it is yet another notable feature that the learning of mathematics begins about three stages later than the teaching: in other words, when the people being taught realize

they are being taught and will have to make the best of it.

The actual learning of mathematics begins of course with arithmetic; that is, with trying to make an 8 without a dent in the bottom left-hand side and with learning how many times what makes how much. This is known as *tables*, and the interesting thing about them is that twelve twelves should have been fixed as the saturation point; one theory being that it represents a point exactly halfway between what human nature ought to be able to carry in its head and what it would be able to carry if it hadn't been bullied.

Arithmetic of course goes on for years and years, but after a short time it divides into algebra and geometry as well. No one is quite sure *why* we are taught algebra; I mean, no one is quite sure at the time. It is only when, a long time later, people are driven on a wet Sunday to reading yesterday's evening paper right through all over again, and get to a problem about a school prize-giving and different numbers of school-children getting different numbers of prizes, that they realize they can only solve it by making x equal something; that is, by having the pencil and the back of the envelope I was telling you about. No one has a pencil *and* the back of an envelope, and so people reading a yesterday's evening paper on a wet Sunday are very grateful to whoever taught them algebra, because it gives them the sensation of having solved a difficult problem without the trouble of working it out.

But geometry is quite different. People learning geometry are quite sure why they are being taught it. It gives them the chance of drawing circles with a compass, instead of just round a penny, as they had to before. It is only afterwards, when they have given the compass away, that people wonder why they were taught geometry; but, to be fair to geometry as well as to those learning it, people do carry a dim idea of it with them for the rest of their lives; a rather nice feeling, when they see a triangle, that once they had it taped.

As for the other branches of mathematics, there are two—physics and trigonometry, which most people will say they know something about. If pressed further, they will say that they didn't mean they knew anything special, just something; meaning of course that they know perfectly well what happens to light when it hits a

looking-glass, or a tree on the other side of a river, but are not saying any more in case the person asking wants to know too. But there is one branch of mathematics which these people will say they know nothing about; I mean what is known as dynamics, or statics, or both. I think, though, if these people will make the effort of dragging up from their subconsciouses something their subconsciouses are not really keen on having dragged up, they will remember a stage in their lives when someone said something about Higher Mathematics and then dropped a weight off a table. It was when these people realized that the weight had been dropped on purpose, which spoilt the joke anyway, and that they would have to worry out the details of why it fell to the ground, that they saw things were going a bit far, and that there was a dividing-line between searching for knowledge and fussing.

Anyone who has been over this dividing-line counts, as you know, as being good at mathematics, and I don't think I have anything to say about *them* either, because people who are good at mathematics are regarded as much the same as people who are good at anything else—chronically under a kind of suspicion, but to be treated almost as well as ordinary people while they keep quiet. People who are good at adding up money, by the way, are not necessarily good at mathematics, or, indeed, good at anything except adding up money and telling other people to shut the door.

I want to say something about mathematics in our daily lives, because it keeps cropping up. For instance, if you are fairly mathematical and someone gives you a telephone number to remember, say 4931, you can work out that 3 and 1, the third and fourth figures, add up to 4, the first figure, and 4 and 4 are 8, but if they were 9 they would be the same as the second figure. This is called *fixing a number in your head*, or wondering why you have forgotten it, and is typical of the effect of mathematics on life. Again, if you are fairly mathematical and are sitting in a railway carriage with four people your side and three the other, you can work out that the next person to get into the carriage will sit your side, and the next person to get out will be from the other side, making *five* people your side and *two* the other; and this is not called anything special, but is typical of the effect of life on mathematics.

At the Pictures

HISTORY

Forty Thousand Horsemen (Director: CHARLES CHAUVEL), the most ambitious production yet to come from Australia, is in its way a success. It has a magnificent theme in the Syrian exploits of the Australian Light Horse during the last war, and takes its opportunities for magnificent and spectacular pictures; the fact that it has to drag along a sub-plot about a French girl (sometimes disguised as an Arab boy) and a hero cannot be overlooked, but may be put up with. "So queeck you come, and so queeck you go," observes this young lady (BETTY BRYANT, who looks a little like that other Australian girl, MERLE OBERON) to *Red Gallagher* (GRANT TAYLOR), an Australian trooper; but at the end, we are to suppose, they stick together. This is after the fall of Beersheba, where *Red* saved the situation by preventing the setting-off of the mines under the town. . . . There are some fine exciting scenes in *Forty Thousand Horsemen*; its weak points are mostly traceable to the dialogue. When we see the German military staff here it always behaves as if it knew the British public were listening to its awed and angry talk about "the Australians" and how when their ammunition is gone they use "cold steel"; and elsewhere scattered about the story are a number of the dear old dialogue-clichés I never thought to hear again in a serious work—including "Not a sound, as you value our lives!"

Speaking of dialogue . . . "Your majesty, Lady Castle-maine grows very impatient." "Well, you know what *she* can do," replies the Merry Monarch merrily. . . . "Grows" is seventeenth-century, or at least Wardour-Street seventeenth-century; the rest of the exchange is twentieth-century music-hall. But I don't want to suggest that this is typical of *Penn of Pennsylvania* (Director: LANCE COMFORT), a great deal of which is very worthy—even (I was sometimes inclined to

think) excessively worthy. It presents a plain account of the great Quaker's life from the time when he ceases to be a gay young man to the time when he sails once more for Pennsylvania after his wife's death. In essentials—the

flight from persecution, the dominance of one man—the story resembles that of the film *Brigham Young*; but there is no big spectacular scene like that of the seagulls, and the picture needs something of the kind. Worthy it is, but not absorbing or exciting. There is evidence that the director has tried hard to do the right sort of thing (knock of piece on chessboard, cut to knock on door; flowers in vase, dissolve into other flowers to indicate lapse of months), but the result as a whole doesn't turn out to be very inspired. CLIFFORD EVANS is good as *Penn*: credibly dominant and full of Welsh persuasiveness. His love scenes with his *Guli* (DEBORAH KERR) are very far from being seventeenth-century, and indeed Miss KERR has to contend throughout with rather an unfair amount of present-day whimsy in her lines (when the baby comes: "William—meet William"). Among the less prominent players DENNIS ARUNDELL makes a kindly and obliging, though not exactly witty (see above) *Charles II*, and although *Mr. Pepys* (HENRY OSCAR) is about the place a good deal, the temptation to show him writing in his diary has been most commendably resisted, probably for the first time in his stage and film career.

Again I have to admit with diffidence that I have enjoyed a trivial light-hearted "musical" four times as much as worthy and conscientious works on historically important themes. The film that has pleased me most this fortnight is *The Golden Hour* (Director: GEORGE MARSHALL), one of those trifles about a dance band that makes good. The very specification perhaps is calculated to scare you away; but in addition to an excellent band (HORACE HEIDT's) this picture has PAULETTE GODDARD and JAMES STEWART, who not only sings a little but also appears to be able to play a swing mouth-organ. (The chances are, I suppose, that he can't really, but if so he *fait semblant* exceedingly well.) The prison scene owes something to CAPRA, but in the best way. A very bright piece; to anybody with any taste at all for this kind of thing I recommend it. R. M.



[Forty Thousand Horsemen]

A REMOUNT



[Penn of Pennsylvania]

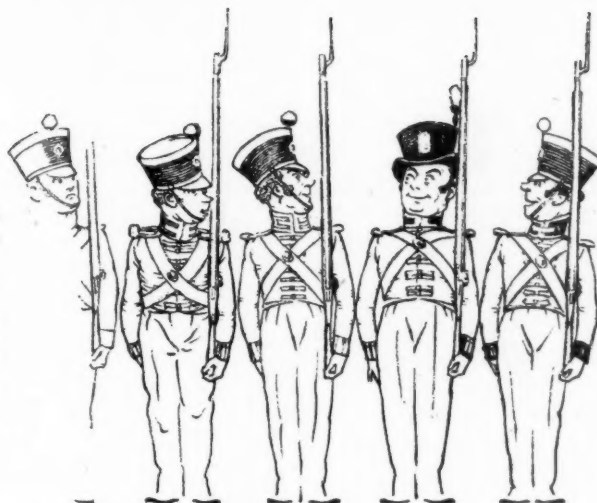
PERMS OF JUSTICE

Lord Mayor of London JOSS AMBLER

Old Comrades

["The Royal Marines will take post in the line between the 49th and 50th Regiments" (or words to that effect).—King George IV.]

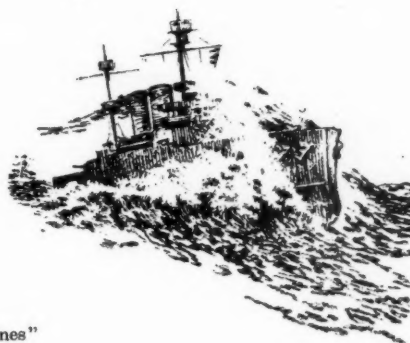
OH, some joins the Army and
some helps their dad
And some takes to mindin'
machines,
But I met a chap wot said "Now
then, my lad,
You'd do well in the Royal
Marines!
It's a fine life they offer ashore
an' afloat..."
So we went like a cow and
her calf
And I took the King's shilling
and wore a red coat
In the Old Forty-Ninth-and-
a-Half!



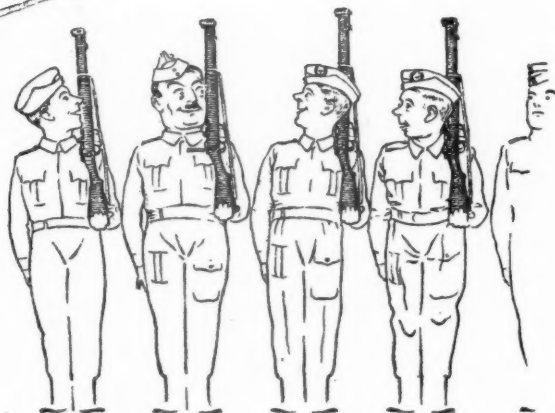
And I did the Spring Cruise sloggin' over the Bay
With the flagship a-takin' it green!
And chai-iked senoritas down Veracruz way
And coaled ship in Shanghai and Shameen;
And after we'd settled with Kaiser Bill's fleet
And handed them Gerries a strafe,
I took me discharge with a lump in me throat
From the old Forty-Ninth-and-a-Half!



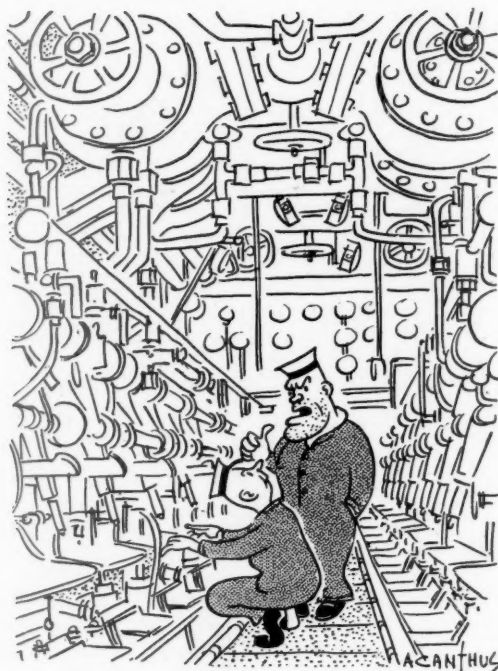
My missus and I bought a cottage on tick
With a nice bit o' garden behind,
And she went out charrin' while I learnt the trick
Of diggin' and work of that kind:
Things wasn't too bad with a couple of kids
And a little bit saved on our pay,
Though folk kept on sayin' "There's trouble ahead,"
But I didn't heed . . . till one day . . .



Through Chatham and Gillingham over the "Lines"
The old corps "Assembly" rang shrill,
And I threw down me spade and I slipped on me coat
And I hopped it along down the hill.
And they set us to drilling in threes on the square
Just to give all the youngsters a larf!
But I don't give a dam, 'cos I'm back once again
In the Old Forty-Ninth-and-a-Half!



J. Sticks



"Seen my nail-file knocking about, Bert?"

Chiltern Lanes

GREAT wains
Dug the deep Chiltern lanes;
The slow and laboured walk
Of heavy horses and the trudging feet
Of herds and hinds grooved down the stubborn chalk;
Those and the seasons—summer's crumbling heat,
The winter rains.

No one
Great effort got this done;
Trifles that no man recked
Accomplished it; ten thousand folk had share
Or twice ten thousand; and his small effect
And which his special portion was and where
Was known to none.

Then why
This parable? Apply
Its meaning; you shall see
Not otherwise this war must needs be won;
Merge many efforts, small though each may be,
And who shall do the winning? Everyone.
You, Sir; and I.

H. B.

Sergeant Chibfield in the Chair

"**N**OW," said Sergeant Chibfield when the platoon had settled down with the philosophic gloom appropriate to the prospect of another lecture, "I want to talk to you about this Debating. You may have seen in Battalion Orders that Debating Exercises are to be carried out when convenient without interference with the training programme, and some of you must 'ave wondered what it was going to be like. Well, Corporal Allsopp 'ere and me have been on a course at Brigade 'eadquarters, and I'm going to explain to you how it's done, so I want you to listen carefully to what we 'ave to tell you."

"Debating," he went on, "to put it short so as you'll understand it, is like arguing, only there's one difference: only one of you is allowed to talk at once. What 'appens is this. The platoons, or as it might be, companies between whom the debate is being 'eld is filed quiet and orderly into a 'all or mess-tent and seated. There is an officer or warrant officer as chairman, whose duty is to see that the debate is carried on fair and orderly. 'E will explain what the question is that's going to be debated. Now, it won't be the sort of thing you argue about in the Naafi—'orses or football teams. It'll be a question of public interest not involving political or religious differences—like, as it might be, 'That dorgs are more faithful than cats.'"

"First orf, the chairman will call on an officer or senior N.C.O. of the platoon or company detailed to defend this 'ere question to say why 'e thinks dorgs are more faithful than cats. At the end of five or it might be ten minutes 'e calls on an officer or senior N.C.O. of the enemy, as you might say, to say why 'e thinks cats is more faithful than dorgs. Then he says the meeting is open to discussion and then other ranks should join in with short speeches, according to which side their platoon may be on."

"Now, just to show 'ow it goes, we'll 'ave a debate now on this dorgs and cats question. I'll be chairman, Number 13 and 14 Sections will say dorgs is more faithful than cats, and Number 15 and 16 will say cats is more faithful than dorgs. Now, Corporal 'Amblitt, I want you to stand up and say for five minutes why dorgs is more faithful than cats. You walk round and check them, Corporal Allsopp."

Corporal Hamblitt climbed to his feet reluctantly, eyed the recumbent platoon with envy and distaste, and cleared his throat.

"Dorgs is more faithful than cats," he began. "Cats," he went on after a pause, "is not so faithful. Of course."

"That's all right as far as you've gorn," said the Sergeant when the silence had become marked. "Now you want to go and explain what the difference is."

"Dorgs is different to cats," Corporal Hamblitt continued obediently, "being larger and 'aving different-shaped faces. Cats is smaller. Dorgs will bite 'uman beings and other dorgs."

"That don't 'ave nothing to do with their being faithful," said the chairman. "You've got to keep to the point and show 'ow faithful they are. Biting's got nothing to do with that."

"Yes it 'as," said Corporal Hamblitt, and then in the more declamatory tones of his public oratory went on: "Dorgs will bite anyone they are told to. If properly trained. You could go down on your 'ands and knees to a cat but it wouldn't scratch anyone it didn't want to. Dorgs," he continued, satisfaction at having suddenly thought of a further point lending new confidence and almost partisan fervour to his tones, "will go out for walks for you, but what do cats do? Just stay at home."

"I've got a cat what comes for walks with me," said a voice from a farther fringe of the platoon, where rubber dice played with prison furtiveness were helping to counteract for a few the drowsiness of the summer afternoon.

"Now, there's the sort of thing I want to warn you against," said the Sergeant. "First, you ain't allowed to chip in while someone else is speaking. Second, you're in Corporal 'Amblitt's section, Private Garland, and you can't 'ave no cat what comes for walks with you—not in this debate, you can't."

"That's all," said Corporal Hamblitt at last, sinking to the ground with relief.

"Very well," said the Sergeant. "Now, Corporal Chinybeare, you stand up and say why you think cats is more faithful than dorgs."

"It seems to me, Mr. Chairman," began Corporal Chinybeare with the awful glibness familiar to the Badgerley Literary and Scientific Society, "that the proposer has failed, and failed deplorably, to put forward a single valid argument in favour of his thesis—"

"Just a minute," interrupted the Sergeant. "You want to be careful about saying things like that. It's all right this time, because you appen to be answering a full corporal like yourself, but suppose it was a sergeant or an officer. You might find yourself in trouble. You want to take it easy, like this: 'It seems to me, Mr. Chairman'—(That was a good bit, that was; 'e's allowed to call me that)—'that although the proposer has given us many 'ighly interesting and surprising arguments, I can't 'ardly 'old with all of them.' All right, carry on."

"It seems to me, Mr. Chairman," began the Corporal again, "that while the proposer has advanced several cogent and ingenious arguments in favour of his proposition, they will be found on examination to be unacceptable—"

"You ain't got the words quite right," said the Sergeant, "but it'll do for now."

"When we come to consider," Chinybeare went on, "the comparative fidelity of the canine and the feline species—"

"I just want to put in a word of warning," said the Sergeant. "Don't go orf on sidelines. You've only got five minutes. Stick to this question 'ere of faithfulness in dorgs and cats. It just means ordering your thoughts, as you might say. It's a knack—it'll come to you all right."

"Now," said the Sergeant half an hour later, when the platoon had fallen in again, the majority still drowsy, some of the rest flushed from the unaccustomed mental exercise of hunting forms of words that would throw some measure of discredit on one or other of the N.C.O.s without infringing the Sergeant's somewhat puritanical interpretation of the decencies of debate, "you see what a debate's like. We'll 'ave this debate over two or three times more till you've got it right. There's six debates you can 'ave altogether—all different. I've got the list of them 'ere from Brigade. We'll go through them all till we've got them perfect. I want to see this platoon top of the battalion for Debating, like it is for Bayonet Fighting and Bombing, so see that you don't forget all the points I've taught you this afternoon."

"Platoon—properly at ease, there—Platoon—'Shun!"

A. M. C.

"The noise came from the electric horn of a car which became jammed and for some time defied all efforts to quieten it.

The owner, a well-known business man, had an embarrassing few moments, and is still being chafed by his friends."

Aberdeen Paper.

Mind he doesn't get sore.

TO READERS OF PUNCH OVERSEAS LONDON CALLING

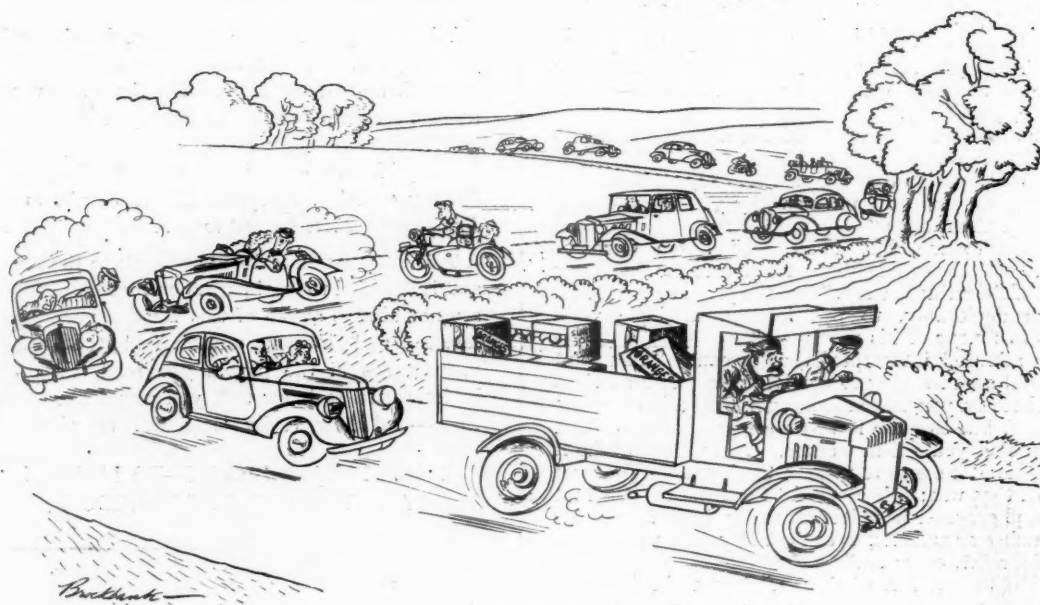
Wherever you may be, overseas, London calls you daily on the radio with the news from Britain—truthful, up-to-the-minute. The times and wave-lengths for your own region are specially chosen, and *full details of all forthcoming overseas programmes in English are transmitted from London, every Sunday morning, by special Morse Service to the British authorities nearest to you.*

This information is freely available to the Press, and is supplied to local papers on request. Editors are not always aware of this English programme service, and if you cannot find the British programmes in the papers you read, they will be interested to know that you would like to see them—and how easily they can be obtained.

THEN PLEASE LISTEN—TO LONDON,
AND THE VOICE OF FREEDOM.



"Do you think you could use your influence to get me a packet of cigarettes?"



Unpopular Pleasures

WIDESPREAD whoops for Woolton's War on Waste!
 "Throw away nothing at all!" is the country's
 vow!

But what's much better for me and my personal taste
 Is—it should be the end of Aunt Dorothy's picnics now.

Gosh! Those picnics on Saturday afternoons
 (When weary week-enders wanted their teas indoors
 In or close to the all-enveloping boons
 Of huge arm-chairs)—those creaking baskets of stores!

Too much food, especially bread and butter;
 Too many knives, but never the opening thing;
 Too many napkins and plates . . . and all in an utter
 Mass and profusion of cloths and paper and string!

Portions of salt in individual bags,
 Always tomatoes, always hard-boiled eggs.
 Sandwiches—jam, cheese, paste—with descriptive tags,
 Buns and biscuits in horrible fancy kegs.

Cake . . . that cake! There was something about the cake
 That emerged each time from Aunt Dorothy's picnic
 hampers

That set it apart from any of usual make
 And made it the acme of soul and digestion dampers;

Great brown wads of it, dry and unappetising,
 Cake that never appeared at indoor meals,

Cake that we soon found even the dogs despising,
 Cake best suited for ground-bait for the eels!

We sat on thistles in most undignified poses;
 We ate tremendously, recklessly and too quickly;
 We fed the dogs, which got butter all over their noses;
 We smoked and swatted the wasps and got hot and
 prickly.

But when it was time to collect the bits and pieces,
 Tidy the place and make for civilization,
 Then it was most that we cursed being nephews and nieces
 Sent on picnics to please a bossy relation.

We never had eaten a quarter of what was provided.
 But in the remains you couldn't tell t'other from which;
 And at this stage people lost tempers—or certainly I did—
 And things got rolled into bundles and burned in a ditch.

For both the decades of peace Aunt Dorothy's outings
 Were the joke of our visits (herself she stayed behind)—
 Such waste of food and paper! Such furious shoutings
 At thistles, and wasps, and cows that were unrefined!

But now that petrol and tea and sugar are short
 (And bikes and coffee and saccharine aren't so hot)
 And Woolton warns wasters he'll yank them up into
 court,
 We reckon Aunt Dorothy's picnics are on the spot!



THE MONOPOLIST

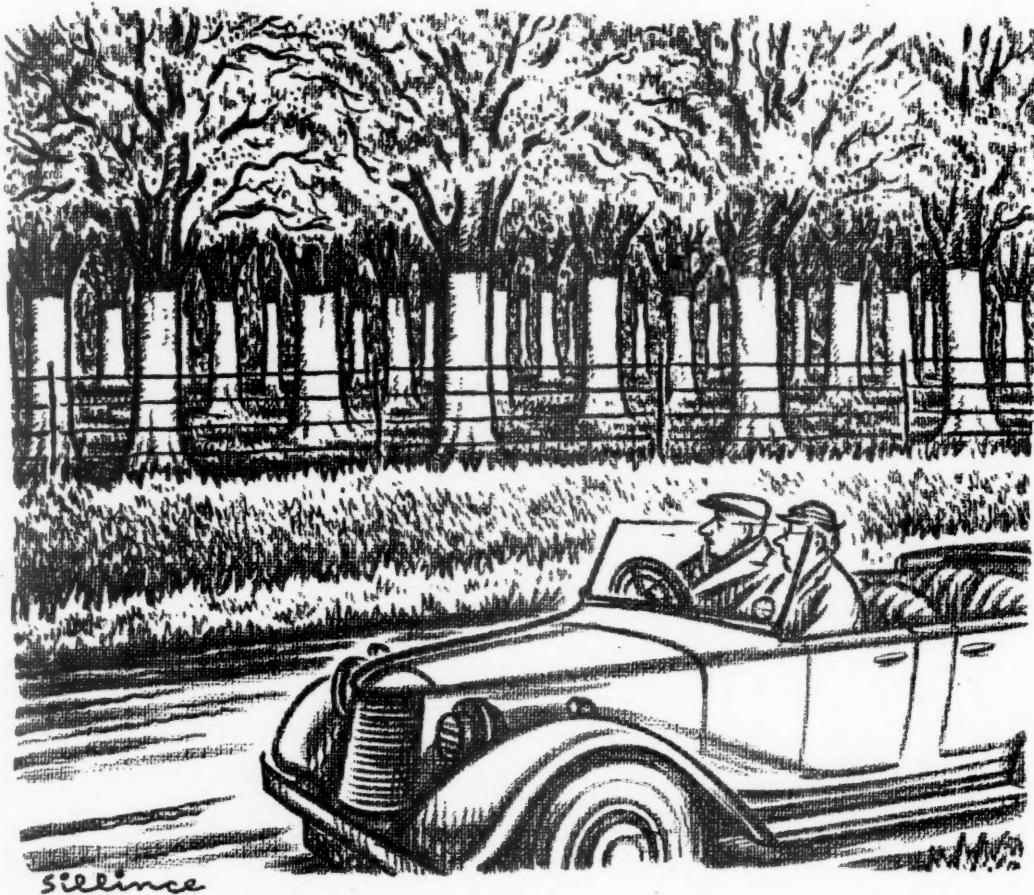
"How dare anybody but me protect anybody?—and what's more, bring them food!"

WITH THE EIGHT O'CLOCK NEWS!

"**E**NEMY activity over this country last night was ——. Damage was done to a town in —— of England. There were a number of houses destroyed. Civilian casualties were ——."

For each and every occasion we try to be prepared to supply the needs of those new victims of enemy aggression; some lose all they possess and need all we are able to give them, and in the meantime hospitals and the fighting forces are eager for the support the PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND brings to them.

Will you please help to supply the most urgent needs? If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"I'm rather surprised they find it necessary to go walking about their orchard in the black-out, Henry."



Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. Is there any means by which the husband may obtain legal custody of his dress coupons? My wife tells me that the Government's decision to permit the pooling of family coupons is a measure to enable the housewife to make use of what she terms "the husband's superfluous allowance." I contend that this is not the case.

COSMO E. CARPWELL.

A. To begin with, I question the advisability of placing the matter upon a legal footing. Such a course can only result in your wife and you drifting further and further apart. Try to introduce a more sporting note into things. Teach her poker, or some other game at which you are yourself proficient, and suggest, casually as it were, the use of coupons as stakes. When you have acquired the entire family's allowance you will be in a strong position to show your generosity by sharing round the coupons equally, having first made good the deficit on your own account. Later you may even reward your wife occasionally with the gift of a coupon for, say, a week's consistently appealing cuisine.

Q. Could you tell me the best thing to do with my Yorkshire terrier during a gas attack? I have been advised to place him in a metal wash-tub and cover over with a wetted blanket, but though I have purchased a tub and tried to make it attractive with cushions, bones, and woolly toys, etc., Nip does not seem to care for it. He stands on his hind legs and bites the blanket into holes. As this would be fatal in the event of a real attack, we are naturally very worried. Nip is in excellent condition and will be fourteen in November.

VIOLET TIPSTAFF (Miss).

A. While puppies are readily adaptable to new conditions, you need to go more slowly with a dog of advanced age who has become conservative in his tastes and is bound to resent changes. Why not get into the tub yourself for a little while each day, taking Nip on your lap, if you can manage it, and pulling the moistened blanket over your head to accustom him to the circumstances of a gas attack? It may seem odd to him at first, but animals are rarely over-

critical, and unless he is a problem-dog, he should soon get the idea. There is always the chance of course that you may have to continue in the tub with him, but risks have to be taken in war-time.

* * * *

Q. My sister in the country writes to tell me of the many tasty yet economical dishes she is now able to prepare as a result of the B.B.C. talks on the Kitchen Front—nettle sandwiches, Solomon's-Seal salads, esparto grass used as a second veg., etc. Can you tell me whether there are any similarly inexpensive dishes within the scope of the town-dweller?

"EXPERIMENTIA."

A. What about birds'-nest soup? The nest of the common house-sparrow does admirably for the purpose and can be obtained from any rain-pipe or spouting. Place the nest in a stew-pan with sufficient water to cover, a lump of beeswax the size of a half-grown pistachio nut, and one tablespoonful of Condy's fluid, or other disinfectant, to cleanse of insects. Allow to simmer for

In Memoriam

C. G.

THE sad news reached us last Wednesday of the death of CHARLES GRAVE, whose drawings have appeared almost every week in *Punch* for so many years, usually on this page. His death was very sudden; he had been telephoning about some point in his work on the same afternoon.

Beyond a few sketches, mainly of West African scenes, his interest lay always in ships and the sea. He aspired, one might almost write, to do for the Port of London what PHIL MAY had done for the streets of the East End, and if he had not PHIL MAY's remarkable felicity of line he had certainly great skill and more enthusiasm. Neither was a Londoner by birth. PHIL MAY began life in Leeds, and CHARLES GRAVE would say of himself "I wasn't born within sound of Bow Bells, but in sound of the riveting at Barrow-in-Furness."

He was no practical sailor, but for one who was not he had acquired by observation and admiration a vast knowledge of the ways of the Mercantile Marine, so that he could present its types farcically, its background with a faithful care that appealed enormously to seamen. He gladly gave away the originals of his drawings, so that they are to be found—must we say were to be found?—in ocean-going liners all over the world. He loved too the little ships. He was fifty-five years old and joined the staff of the Round Table six years ago.

During the Great War—as we still strangely call it—he served in the Middlesex Regiment and the Tank Corps, and his service left him badly lamed, so that though he had been an ardent cricketer, cruising was almost the only recreation possible for him in later years. Before the ordinary passenger had found his allotted cabin, CHARLES GRAVE seemed to be on intimate terms with half the crew. At his liveliest times on these voyages he was accustomed to break from ordinary speech into broad Lancashire and then into negro American and back again without any warning, amongst people who were almost strangers, with a fluency worthy of the variety stage, and his cheerfulness (for he suffered a great deal of pain) was amazing.

He was very proud of having been a choir-boy in his youth, and one at least of his friends will never forget a long and convivial evening spent in talking to the pilots of the Thames, and listening to their stories, and CHARLES's insistence that the most obvious occupation for the following evening was to attend evensong at Rochester Cathedral.

His pockets were always full of maps which he would open and spread out for our consideration and our amateur speculations on strategy; but perhaps he always felt that we paid too much attention to the insignificant spaces of land, hills, roads, rivers and railways, and too little to the sea-routes which he loved so much and was not to travel again.

three hours. Now baste with cooking-fat and stew gently until the twigs are tender. The froth is then skimmed off (this may be served separately with a little grated nutmeg) and the dish is ready for the table, sufficient for six persons.

An even richer flavour may be obtained by the use of pigeons' nests, but as these birds tend to build in high places (e.g., the façade of St. Paul's, the Nelson Column, etc.), the co-operation of your local A.F.S. might be required.

* * * *

Q. Shortly after the outbreak of

war my wife was advised by a thoughtless friend to buy up, whenever possible, commodities which might be difficult to obtain later on. She began in a small way with an occasional tin of mustard or small-size pot of chicken, ham and tongue paste (of which she is very fond), but the habit has gained such a hold that she is now buying up every type of commodity of which she believes there may be a shortage later, irrespective of whether we need it or not. Within the last week alone there have arrived at the house a pair of workman's dungarees, a secondhand case of stuffed fish, an article of

furniture known, I believe, as a *bidet*, two piano-accordions, and a perambulator with sun-canopy. As I am not a rich man and we have been childless for twenty-eight years, you may imagine my annoyance and embarrassment, particularly at the last-mentioned purchase. What ought I to do?

ARTHUR JENKS, B.Sc.

A. Very likely the clue to the situation is your chance admission of your wife's fondness for meat pastes. It looks to us as though she has been actuated throughout her married life by a passion for these paste foods, but has continually restrained her more extravagant impulses out of deference to your professed need for economy, and now that she is faced with the possibility of there being little or none of this food on the market soon, even for the *monied* housewife, her subconscious is impelling her to "get her own back" by spending recklessly that percentage of your income which she must secretly have desired to spend on meat pastes in the past. Your best course will be to vie with her in spending. Go up to town at once and secure a couple of Recamier sofas, half a dozen dictaphones and a bath-chair or two. Before the week is out your wife will begin to realize that if you are both hot and strong on the game there will be no meat pastes for her even in the New Order of things after the war, and you should have no further trouble. The articles purchased could be disposed of by private auction later.

* * * *

Q. I am forty-two years of age and though, as far as I know, organically sound, I have become extremely nervy on account of my work's taking me twice daily across the ferry. The fear that one of our own mines might break loose and come floating up the Forth is beginning to get me down. My friends seem to think I ought to be psycho-analysed. Do you agree? I am a flautist, a member of the British Legion, and a Jehovah's Witness.

LEITH LADY.

A. No, what you need is a life-belt, and this can be made at home very simply. Cut open an old boa or fur necklet and line with cork-cuttings, which are made by cutting up old corks. About one hundred corks from medicine bottles, furniture-polish bottles, etc., would be sufficient, or fifty champagne corks, as these are exceptionally buoyant. Work eyelet-holes here and there to let the water drain in and out, then attach a neck-band and waist-strings of stout material

the same colour as the fur. The result is a useful and inconspicuous protection which can be worn at sea without giving an impression of alarm in danger. Gentlemen's waistcoats may be treated the same way.

* * *

Q. The last time they blitzed down our street, a zinc cistern with copper fittings belonging to us was blown out of our washhouse and disappeared. Last Tuesday, happening to look over the wall of No. 5 with the aid of a ladder, my husband noticed same on its side, divided into what you might call compartments with rabbits and wire-netting. When he took a hand-cart round for it, No. 5 said it was now theirs, as it came under the heading of flotsam and jetsam. This seems a bit thick, especially when we had half a piano and small tin bath from No. 11 stuck in our tree and returned same without any unpleasantness. Also Grandma has pricked holes in her gas-mask, as she says she can't breathe otherwise. Would you take her to the Municipal Gas-Filled Chamber to see if it is all right?

(Mrs.) ALFRED BATES.

A. I'm afraid I can't, but if you could get her to go yourself it would convince the old lady better than any argument we could suggest. For the cistern trouble, first make quite sure that the article in question is yours and then lose no time in seeking legal advice. The offence is of a double nature. In failing to return the said vessel after the *Luftwaffe* had blown it into his garden your neighbour becomes an accessory after the fact. His continued misappropriation of your property leaves him open to a charge of failure to keep his rabbits under proper control and wilful connivance at their trespassing upon your cistern. Good luck, Mrs. Bates!

* * *

Q. I am very keen to join the Waafs and have been on the point of doing so for some months, but I am so uniform-conscious that I cannot make myself take the plunge. Is there any plain-clothes branch of this service which might take me?

BOOKMAKER'S DAUGHTER.

A. You do not say whether it is the uniforms of others you are conscious of, or the wearing of such yourself. If the latter, it looks to us as though there is some deep-rooted objection to uniform as uniform, springing possibly from some childhood experience, long since forgotten. As the daughter of a bookmaker, it may be that you unconsciously associate uniforms with

members of the police force, scenes of violence, penitentiary clothing, etc. Why not purchase a child's tram-conductor set, easily obtainable at any toy-shop, and break yourself in little by little? For the first week wear only the ticket-punch; the next week, add the money-pouch and belt. Continue going about in ticket-punch, money-pouch and belt for three weeks or a month before the final addition of the hat. After this, you should not mind wearing anything.

While none of the garments worn by the Women's Services could be said to be anything but plain, there is no branch, so far as we know, which is described officially as "plain-clothes."

o o

Interviews in Africa

(Accurately translated)

The Sheikh

THE Sheikh who came to tea tactfully left his ship of the desert, a large Ford V.8 saloon, outside the garden, because it was so infinitely superior to anything his host (A.) had ever possessed. He walked modestly up the drive in flowing robes, carrying a gold-tipped cane and wearing tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles. At intervals he deafeningly cleared his throat so that his presence might not pass unnoticed. Thanks to this, A. emerged from his house to meet him.

"Peace be on you," he said.

"And on you," said the Sheikh, determined at all costs to be original, "be peace."

They shook hands. A short—even a snappy—conversation ensued.

"How are you?"

"Thanks be to God. Are you well?"

"Thanks be to God. And you?"

"I am well, thanks be to God."

"How do you do," concluded A. and they paced in silence towards the house.

Just before they reached it the Sheikh said suddenly, "By God's will, your Excellency is well."

Caught out, A. jumped and said, "Thanks be to God," and the Sheikh said, "Thanks be to God."

At the house, B. (A.'s wife) shook hands, and an almost identical conversation followed, except that, as B. knew less Arabic than A., the Sheikh drew well ahead. When he had finished, B. said to A., "I wish he had wiped his boots," and added, "I don't think I need stay, do you? I don't think I could quite stand an hour of

it." A. looked rather glassily in front of him and said, "*Il comprend Anglais*," and B. took no prominent part in the conversation for the rest of the afternoon. A. added, "Anyhow, *vous ne devez pas être si insular*."

They seated themselves round the tea-table. The Sheikh sat cautiously on the extreme edge of his chair and glanced over his spectacles in a manner disappointingly un-sheikh-like. When, however, seven lumps of sugar had been put in his tea conversation began to open up.

The Sheikh spoke of the war. Everyone had always known, he said, that the British Army was undeniably the largest in the world. A. said that it had never been really quite the largest, and actually wasn't quite now. The Sheikh smiled to show he approved of modesty, and waved his hand to show he knew better, and said that, even if that were so, it was incontestably the best equipped. A. said he wasn't sure it had been the best equipped at the beginning of the war.

The Sheikh begged him not to deny it, and said, even were that so, it was common knowledge that it was the bravest in the world.

A. stopped denying things, and there was a slight pause while the Sheikh failed to crack a ginger-nut biscuit with his teeth; he grew rather shy, and presently dipped it in his tea. Fortified by this solution of his difficulty, he went on to say how convinced he was that Britain was just about to break the heads of Hitler and Mussolini and smash their armies into a thousand pieces. A. said, "Oh, well—" and both he and B. looked pleased but unassuming. The Sheikh, fearing he had overdone it a little, suddenly looked very pious and said, "If God wills"; but the tea-party was going with a swing now, and there followed an hour's discussion between A. and the Sheikh on the price of sugar, while B. forged rapidly ahead with her mitten for the Navy.

When the Sheikh finally rose to leave, A. was in good form, and kept easily level with his farewells. The Sheikh, however, had the last word. From half-way down the drive he suddenly turned round and spoke out of the gathering darkness (and from the shelter of an oleander bush) to call for a blessing upon the house. A., whose mouth was crammed full with the last cream bun from which all this while he had been restraining himself, was outwitted and could not quite make the answer before he heard the Sheikh put his ship of the desert into bottom gear and roar speedily into the night.

At the Play

"FUN AND GAMES" (PRINCE'S)

"HERE we are again!" has long been the catch-word of the clown, and it is certainly a justified proclamation at the Prince's. The re-assembled gamesters are, in chief, Mr. SYDNEY HOWARD, Mr. ARTHUR RISCOE, Mr. RICHARD HEARNE, and Miss VERA PEARCE—a quartet which astonishingly combines the two appeals of mass and of mobility. Mr. FRANK LEIGHTON is back with them to sing and dance, and he is accompanied by a newcomer to these high revels, Miss CAROL RAYE, who, on the first night, won the house with her graces. She is very young and buoyant as a bubble; in a little ballet about a ballet-dancer's shoes she is delightful and much assisted by the skilful, courteous performance of Mr. RICHARD HEARNE, who plays up to her perfectly.

Indeed, Mr. HEARNE is in all things a tremendous asset to Mr. FIRTH SHEPARD's shows. He is an acrobat turned comedian, and is as neat in his acting as in his athletics. His foible is to present the aspect of a benign dotard and then to caper and collapse like any slippery lad. One minute he is the very genius of lumbaginous senility: the next he is catapulting across the stage, preferring to enter every house through its window, and head-first at that. Had he been one of the cricketers HEARNES he would surely have been the most remarkable fielder ever seen.

Then there is Mr. SYDNEY HOWARD, eloquent as ever with the tentative tread of his most expressive foot and with the nice conduct of his hand, which so well merits the old slang-name of "flipper." His studies in a sallow, paunchy, fish-like naughtiness are always first-rate. He rolls a mischievous eye with a wan and watery melancholy. His characters are generally "cautions," but they have also the charm of a

poignant frailty. He stirs our parental compassion while he robustly tickles our ribs.

Mr. RISCOE adds length and languor to the four-square follies of Mr. HOWARD and the volatility of Mr.

about Sally is not as taking as his last. Miss VERA PEARCE is a comedienne who combines weight and dash in dazzling degree and reminds one of those invaluable "Rugger" forwards who can sprint as fast as any while shoving harder than most. Miss PEARCE can be the massive life and soul of a burlesque of an acrobatic troupe and then cartoon a ball-room-dancer with all the nimbleness in the world.

To comedians of this calibre it matters little what the book sets down. Mr. DOUGLAS FURBER's text is not typically Furberish, but it has a few good thrusts and frequently leaves the clowns to go their own way—a safe permission. The end of the first half, about the huntin' folk, is a pleasant enough study in scarlet for the eye, but fails to be funny, and there is very familiar stuff in a sketch about the homeward journey of two suburban "soaks." But it is typical of the ingenuity of Mr. HEARNE

and Mr. HOWARD that they can somehow make new patterns out of the old alcoholic tottering. No joke seems beyond their rejuvenating powers. Their very limbs and joints are whimsical.

Mr. SHEPARD need not worry about the success of *Fun and Games*. It is just glossy enough in its lighter episodes and more than absurd enough in its nonsense to please both those who like "the light fantastic" and those who crave for heavy shafts of the larger lunacy. If you are a stickler for new things and claim to be aware of tipsy staggers, red-nosed M.F.H.s, and heavy comedians mincing it as daughters of the game, then possibly these revels will seem to be such a conservative education as to be an affliction. But if, on the other hand, you are one who likes to watch the old tricks retaken by expert playing, here is your occasion. Mr. SHEPARD knows what his public wants and his players know just how to provide it.

I. B.



YOICKS! TALLY-HO! AND ALL THAT

MR. RICHARD HEARNE, MR. ARTHUR RISCOE, AND MISS VERA PEARCE

HEARNE. Essays in affable vacancy suit him best, and he makes a good singing-master, though his new ditty



MARCHING ORDERS

MR. ARTHUR RISCOE, MR. SYDNEY HOWARD AND MISS VERA PEARCE

The Stranger in the Tube

THERE is a code for those who travel under ground. They do the same things; and know the same tricks. They can turn the pages of a large paper in a small space. They go the quick way through the door marked "No Exit." They rarely offer their seats to a lady; they know when she is getting out at the next stop or would rather stand. They do not pass down the car, because they know that those who do never get out again. They know by instinct and a glance at the travellers which is a Wembley and which a Watford train. They know where the train stops and where the doors will open; and which will be a smoking carriage. And they get out facing the exit.

And they know the stranger in their midst.

Strangers have been noticed before. There was a time when buses ceased to run and their users went below. They swarmed on to the escalators; they tottered on and they staggered off; and when they were on they stood to the left. With them they had large parcels. They blocked the stairway when the train was in. They talked and laughed loudly; but in their hearts they were timid and afraid. The wind round the corner blew off their hats. Their coats and umbrellas caught in the doors. They studied the map with anxious industry. They rose before their station and lurched with the train. They herded by the door while the train stood still in the tunnel. They were eyed with scorn by the regulars. But they left their mark on our shoes and on our shins; and we were glad at their going.

The stranger is with us again. He is dressed in khaki or blue. He also stands on the left and the others cannot pass. He too has things on and around him—rifles and gas-masks, tin hats and haversacks. He too anxiously studies the map, and goes for Paddington on a Wembley train. Often he approaches us and speaks; he asks us questions as the train comes in. He speaks with the burr of the North or the broad tones of the West; but we hear "King's Cross" and the rest must be treated as irrelevant. We tell him where he must change and how many stations he has to go. But are we right? Our neighbour on the left says we are not, and we talk it over. Where were last night's bombs? Is that way open? Or was it ever the



"The Third Act includes a banquet—I shall require your ration books."

way? No matter; we are past the station now; and he would probably have missed his train anyway. We go for a drink. It's not what we used to mean by a drink; but we have it in the same place; and it costs us more; and that makes us feel all the more generous.

We get home; and before we go to bed we find out where he ought to have changed for King's Cross. Next time we shall be ready.

Here he comes; it might almost be the same soldier. We wait for him. The fellow mumbles rather; must be one of those Lowland regiments. But we give him the answer, and pass him

a cigarette—one out of the packet Aunt Marion bought for us. We are both in the train, and we smile at him encouragingly. There he is, picking up his things. One moment, though; I'm not sure it wasn't Liverpool Street he said. Yes! I'm sure it was. Good heavens! he's getting out. He must be stopped!

Strangers in the tube herd near the door before the train gets into the station. They have parcels; they stand in your way and are oblivious. I never had a chance of stopping him. And anyway he would never have caught his train. No soldier that I know ever did.



"You've passed the lights just on the red, and Muriel says will you and Alice and the kids come over for tea Sunday?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

World-Order in Freedom

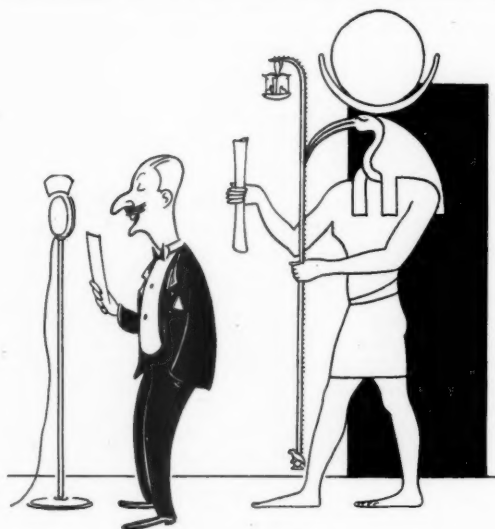
COMMANDER STEPHEN KING-HALL chases most manfully after the march of events in *Total Victory* (FABER, 7/6). A foreword in May and a postscript in June help to keep him in step, and he is able to include even some references to the opening phases of the Russian campaigns; but the PRIME MINISTER and the PRESIDENT have been almost too many for him, for while he is pressing for some bold and definite action that shall carry the war of brains into the enemy's very strongholds, the proclamation of the eight clauses of the Charter of the Atlantic has acceded practically everything that this book was written to demand almost before it was published. The author argues that an enemy is beaten—totally and finally beaten—only when he wishes in his heart of hearts for precisely that state of affairs to come about that his opponent is aiming to procure. It follows that he must be attacked not only physically but psychologically, and it is no long step to discover that this country must supply potential allies within the German Reich with what the writer calls "agenda for controversy." Such agenda can only be a glimpse of a future world-state worth an infinity of risk and effort. It must be offered in full sincerity and must be big enough and simple enough to swallow up victors and vanquished and HITLER's pretence New Order alike in one grand liberation of all mankind.

Poland—Recollection and Prophecy

Poland, as she was—as she will be, heaven helping, again—is the theme of *Polish Panorama* (FABER, 8/6). The late HUGH WALPOLE, introducing sixty or seventy exquisite full-page photographs, the work of anonymous photographers still in occupied territory, seizes his chance to give a memorable list of what Poland, and the free world in general, is fighting for. "God, love of man for man, domesticity, work on the soil of one's land, love of the Arts, freedom of thought and speech, comradeship of nations." How far Poland stood for these ideals and how little for industrialism—in spite of the mills of Lodz, the derricks of Boryslaw and the pork factories of Bydgoszcz—this delightful record can substantiate. Even Warsaw's "functional" housing has (apart from its depressing skyline) a homely and traditional air. But it is the churches, humble as fir-cones in wood or sumptuously baroque in stone, and the peasant homes and peasant clothing, that yield the finest of the pictures that Messieurs LEWITT and HIM have so appositely collected and commented. This is a book to give and to keep; and may better days speedily transmute its glorious memories into still more glorious facts.

An Ally Worth Having

In *Remember Greece* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) Miss DILYS POWELL has given us an unforgettable book about an unforgettable people. She knows Greece well and has spent every summer from 1926 to 1939 in Athens. In 1937 General METAXAS said to her, "Greece is by tradition and reason the friend of England. I am working to make Greece an Ally worth having." The result of that work is given in one short chapter, "The Good Fight" which is



ACANTHUS

"... and here is a communiqué given by our observer in the Nile Valley."

based on dispatches. Whatever Miss POWELL says she says well: "... the *Frinton*, an amiable old passenger and cargo ship ... was attacked off the north of Crete"—that is an endearing phrase; but she orders our respect for Greece in a chapter, "The Story of Free Men," where she reminds us of ancient history and privileges and, with HERODOTUS, warns others to "Remember the Athenians."

Invidiosa Atrocitas Verborum

Atrocity stories, to be the appropriate fuel of indignation, should, one feels, be accurate and authentic. A novel of atrocity stories is not a satisfactory form of fiction. With no personal knowledge of the condition of Austria between the *anschluss* and the present war, it is impossible to tell how much of *These Times of Travail* (MURRAY, 9/6) is based on fact and how much it owes to Miss L. F. LOVE-DAY PRIOR's imagination. That she is not sensitively accurate may be surmised from her proposing *Kinder, Küche und Kirche* as an average storm-trooper's idea of womanly limitations. Surely the *Kirche*, at any rate, went out with KAISER WILHELM? This particular storm-trooper plays a dynamic part in the abduction of *Theresa von Starnwitz*, German *fiancée* of a Tyrolean count, and in the Viennese Jew-baiting episodes which diversify the young couple's tragic fortunes. With the exception of a well-meaning Italian diplomat, most of the book's Nazis and Fascists are depicted as personally revolting as well as politically unattractive. In fact its writer so revels in animus that one trembles to think what her pen would have made of the requisitioning of a Cotswold hotel or the billeting of a Whitechapel evacuee.

The Mayor of Dzikow

A peasantry is a difficult order to create unless it is recruited from above; for a propertyless man is usually work-shy and improvident, whereas the capital virtues of the peasant are industry and thrift. This, one gathers from the enchanting life-story of a Polish mayor, who, born under Austria in 1842, passed with his people *From Serfdom to Self-Government* (MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., 8/6) and died in 1927 a free landholder. JAN SLOMKA, whose autobiography has been charmingly translated by Mr. WILLIAM JOHN ROSE, arrived too early to flourish with the Peasant Party whose star declined under PILSUDSKI. His political setting is admirably described in a foreword by M. STANISLAW KOT, Minister of the Interior. What SLOMKA himself gives you is the folk-life of a very primitive people and his own painstaking rise from herd-boy to mayor. His Austrian overlords were kindly tyrants; but aristocratic pride and servile inertia left business matters to the Jews, with disastrous results. SLOMKA, however, gloriously survived both the endowing of his sisters and the hazards of the Great War; though the former left him with only four acres for himself and the latter saw his village



Napoleon (sternly, to private whose kit is laid out for inspection). "WHERE IS YOUR FIELD-MARSHAL'S BATON?"

George Morrow, September 6th, 1916

captured five times by the Austrians and four times by the Russians.

Devil and Deep Blue Sea

Mr. VICTOR BRIDGES' latest addition to his long list of novels, *The House on the Saltings* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/3), should be as popular with his public as any of its forerunners. In the first chapter the hero, just returned to England, sloshes a bully who has hit a woman and is unlucky enough to kill him. While he is hiding in a Thames barge from the police he overhears a conversation between two Germans (the period is just before the war) who are plotting against England. As a wanted man, he does not fancy the idea of confiding in the police. We may think him foolish, but what does that matter? He is the hero and the peg to hang plots on. So we are given a yacht and another hero, a pretty girl, a villain, some spies, a trusty fisherman, and a cache of German—no, we must not say what. It is all direct and unpretentious stuff which gives liberally and makes no demands. Can one say fairer than that in war-time?

The World Is Old.

THE world is old, like soil that has been bled
By too much planting in a too small bed;
And who'll be left that's young enough to hoe
And dig down deeply to the new earth below?



"Pore lil' feller—I told Emily when she went into munitions that he'd never make a shopper."

Adastral Bodies

Into Bondage

WE were a cheerful little party on the train; nobody would have guessed that we had that morning torn ourselves from our wives and families and were now speeding inexorably towards heaven only knew what privations and perils, not to say humiliations.

In our conversation we dwelt for the most part on our good fortune in having been admitted to the Royal Air Force, especially at a time when (so rumour had it) Sir Archibald Sinclair was about to announce that all vacancies had been filled; we spoke of the easy camaraderie which would characterize our new existences; we spoke of the rocket-like promotions of war-time service, instancing the cases of friends of ours who had become Flight Sergeants in a twinkling, and had been stationed within walking distance of

their homes within a week of enlistment. Not of course (we added hurriedly) that we expected anything like that, or even desired it; it was much better (we all agreed, wondering what our wives were feeling like now) to make a clean break, settling down to the new life unhampered by old associations.

Lightheartedly we showed each other snapshots of our wives and families, just to demonstrate that they awoke no absurd sentimental recollections. There were More Important Things at stake, we said, putting our wallets away again casually and in the wrong pockets.

There was one of our number who did not enter so freely into the gay chatter—one who appeared bowed down by care. But then he held the responsible position of Senior Recruit,

had been entrusted with the buying of all our tickets, and was under orders to deliver us safely at the other end. To mislay one or more of us would have been to blacken his R.A.F. character from the start, and from time to time we saw his lips and fingers moving slightly as he counted us. Sometimes too he would dart an anxious glance up to the rack above his head, making certain that the tremendous buff envelope was still where he had left it, having escaped being blown out of the window or stolen by His Majesty's enemies.

To be truthful, all of us were a little anxious about this envelope. It was consigned, like ourselves, to the Officer Commanding No. 24 Recruiting Centre, Somewhere-in-Wales; it was so official, so tremendous, so awe-strikingly buff, and it contained, we suspected, much

confidential information about us—information which the Officer Commanding would file away in a huge cabinet marked "Secret," and would refer to whenever any of us covered ourselves with shame or glory.

When we emerged expectantly upon the squalid little platform Somewhere-in-Wales we were gratified to see that the Air Council had prepared a reception for us. This took the shape of a small corporal of misanthropic appearance—the type of small corporal to whom we had given lifts in our cars at home and who had, in thanking us, caused us embarrassment by addressing us as "Sir." This particular small corporal spared us any such embarrassment.

"Cruits?" he said. It was more of an accusation than an inquiry. Our Senior Recruit peeped gravely from behind the buff envelope.

"I have a letter," he began, "addressed to—"

The small corporal sighed shortly.

"This way. An' take your hands out of your pockets—you with glasses!"

We drew ourselves up. This was not quite what we had expected. In the Army, as everyone knows, there is a certain lack of respect for the individual, a certain gruffness about the non-commissioned officers; one has heard too that in the Navy there is little show of courtesy towards Ordinary Seamen . . . but in the Royal Air Force, which did, after all, win the Battle of Britain and is allowed to wear a collar and tie with its uniform—

"By the left, quick march!" said our reception committee, and went on to ask whether we were deaf, daft, or what. We broke into an injured but dignified shamble. It was always like this, we said to ourselves, with the lower grades of authority. It would be a very different matter when we appeared in our neat blue suits before the Officer Commanding and handed him our buff envelope.

As we passed through the narrow streets several detachments of airmen marched by, their patently new uniforms sitting on them a little stiffly, their patently new hats arranged a little too carefully; most of their patently new boots squeaked. In spite of this they obviously considered themselves old hands at the game, and threw us glances of amused compassion. Their corporals gave our escort a resigned jerk of the head. The civilian population of Somewhere-in-Wales failed to vouchsafe us even these small signs of welcome, merely looking (and occasionally trying to walk) blandly through us. We thought of our farewell parties of the night

before, when we had been given cause to believe that we were people of some importance. . . .

Presently we found ourselves standing in a queue. Considered in the light of many subsequent standings-in-queues, we now realize that we only stood in this one for a comparatively short time—half an hour, perhaps. Before we left Somewhere-in-Wales we were to stand in queues for hours at a time, thinking nothing of it until we ultimately moved off and discovered that *rigor* had long ago set in from our waists downwards.

Presently our Senior Recruit found himself at the counter of a small shop; behind it there was waiting a tousled member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

"Give," said this maiden, holding out a hand but not looking up.

Our Senior Recruit coughed rather importantly.

"I have a letter," he said, "addressed to the Officer Commanding—"

She took that tremendous buff envelope addressed to the Officer Commanding; she clawed it irreverently open, extracted the contents, glanced at them and thrust them amongst a pile of waste-paper beside her; then, delicately damping an indelible pencil on her already em-purpled tongue, she wrote our names in a book and presented us each with a towel, a tin mug (much chipped), and a knife, fork and spoon of inferior quality. At the request of a new and slightly larger corporal (our earlier one having returned to the station) we joined a second queue which was

moving through the shop with glacier-like stealth.

The knife, fork and spoon had cheered us a little, and we snuffed the air, feeling that food must be somewhere in the offing; but the only scents were those of dust, damp, hair-oil and household soap. In the fullness of time we found ourselves in a shop-parlour or ante-chamber, and here we put down our suitcases and sat upon them.

About a hundred other men in neat blue suits were doing the same, their towels over their shoulders, their mugs in their pockets and their knives, forks and spoons ready for any emergency, in their hands. There was no conversation. We gazed at the murals—"Fly With the R.A.F." they said, and warned us that anyone losing his towel, mug, knife, fork or spoon would be sternly dealt with. We were also warned, in amateurish calligraphy, neither to sing nor spit. It was very hot, and we were able to resist the temptation to commit either of these last offences.

The descending sun shone through the windows dustily. Our shadows moved slowly along the walls. Our numbers increased steadily until there was no longer any room for the newcomers to sit on their suitcases, and they took to leaning on the walls, pretending that they would not have accepted an easy-chair even if it had been offered. Corporals rushed in occasionally, causing us to spring to our feet by the very urgency of their own demeanour; but they only wanted to know whether we had had our photographs taken or whether the room was full yet. One of them demanded that those ambitious to become members of Air Crews should step forward—and then that they should step back again. . . . Then he went away. . . . On one occasion no less a personage than a sergeant put his head in at the door (there was no room for any more of him). "Strike!" he observed, and withdrew.

During one of the long lulls there arose somewhere at the far end of the room a murmur of conversation. The masses swayed slightly, and the murmur began to come our way. What had happened? Someone had fainted perhaps, or the Officer Commanding had dropped in to pay his respects. Out of the wordless mumbling one clear-cut line of dialogue reached us. "Three-and-a-half," it said—"and the little girl's eighteen months."

Stirring, we forced a gap between our bodies and all the other bodies—and took out our wallets, feeling a little sentimental but not at all ashamed.



"So our paths cross again,
Diamond Jim!"

The Specialist

I WAS instructed to send back information about anything that happened. "The only man I can spare to go with you is old Botwhistle," the Platoon Commander said. "He is no earthly use as a soldier: we've tried to train him on every kind of weapon, but he is such a dullard that he never remembers anything. But he ought to be able to carry written messages."

We concealed ourselves under a gorse-bush. I kept watch, while Botwhistle chewed grass. After ten minutes I saw a large body of the enemy. I wrote out a message and gave it to Botwhistle. "Get back with that to H.Q.," I said. "I've asked for a machine-gun: if it comes quickly we can wipe them out." Botwhistle put his thumb into his mouth to remove a detached piece of grass. "I done a course on them things, light and 'eavy," he said. "Oh, you're a machine-gunner?" I said. He looked a bit doubtful. "Well, I don't remember how to use them," he answered. I was disappointed, but the chance was too good to let slip. "If you've done a course on them, you are a machine-gunner," I insisted. "And if we've a machine-gunner here, we are entitled to assume the presence of the

machine-gun. A Bren, I think, don't you? With that, that party of the enemy is wiped out already."

I altered the message accordingly and sent him back with it. When he returned I was facing a hot attack. "If only we had some Mills bombs!" I cried. "I done a course on them," said Botwhistle. "Something to do with pins, ain't they?" "Never mind about the details," I said. "You're a treasure, Botwhistle. Take this message: 'Attacking party annihilated with grenades.'"

By the time he returned, I was being attacked by two enemy soldiers who carried between them a large placard bearing the ominous word TANK. I was in danger of being overrun. I sighed audibly for a Projector and some anti-tank bombs. "I done a course —" said Botwhistle. "Splendid fellow!" I cried. "Take this message."

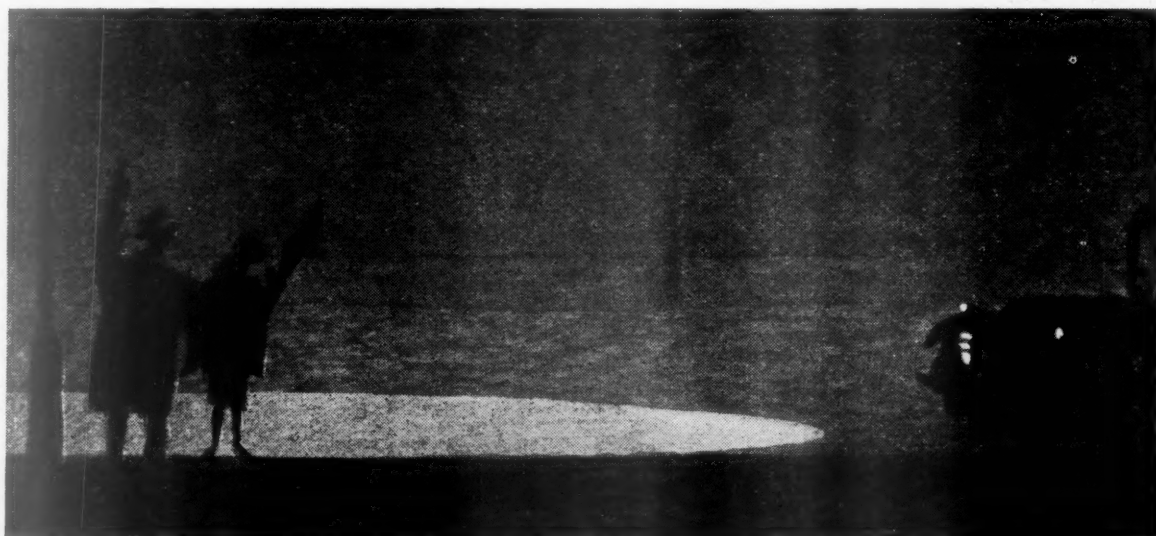
Before he returned the tank was upon me. It declined to believe in my Projector on the grounds that (a) I had no placard, and (b) anyway, if I had a Projector, I could not work it at speed single-handed. I explained Botwhistle's temporary absence. "He's an expert," I said. "He done a course."

The tank said that was all nonsense.

It argued further that as I had only my rifle and bayonet it had blotted me out. I demurred at being blotted out, so we compromised: I was to continue to live, subject to my retiring to hospital with my legs shot off.

On the way back I met Botwhistle, sauntering along with two pieces of grass protruding from his mouth. "Botwhistle," I cried, "you've done a First Aid course, I suppose?" He said he had. "Then you are carrying me to safety—I'm badly wounded."

We walked on, side by side. Botwhistle's imaginative powers had hitherto been spared from strain by his absences as a runner. But now he was perplexed. "How'm I carrying you?" he asked as we climbed over a gate. I thought that unimportant, but to satisfy him I said, "We've already assumed a Bren gun, several Mills bombs and a Projector for you—we may as well add a stretcher." He chewed in silence for two thoughtful minutes. Then, suddenly, he said proudly, "I recollect' someping." "Ah," I said, "I always thought that courses were pretty valuable." "Stretchers," he said, "is a two-man job, with 'andles. 'Ow am I to carry you single-anded?"



"Hi, taxi, taxi—no, it can't be a taxi, it's stopping!"

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